

Polly Honeycombe,

A

DRAMATICK NOVEL

O F O N E A C T.

As it is Acted at the

T H E A T R E - R O Y A L

I N

D R U R Y - L A N E.



D U B L I N:

Printed for O. NELSON, J. EXSHA'W, and
W. WHITESTONE, Bookfellers.

MDCCLXI.

Folly Honours

A

DRAMATICK NOVEL

OF ONE ACT

As it is Acted at the

THEATRE ROYAL

IN

DRURY LANE



Printed by J. Johnson, Strand
In the Strand, near the Theatre



P R E F A C E.

AFTER expressing my Gratitude to the Publick for the kind reception they have given to Miss Honeycombe, and returning thanks to the Performers for their care and uncommon excellence in the Representation, I did not think of adding any thing further by way of Preface: but my Publisher insists on the necessity of my saying something in behalf of the Piece, which, I think, ought to speak for itself, and that my friend's scheme is much of the same colour with Bayes's practice of printing papers *to insinuate the plot into the Boxes*. It had been usual with the Writers of the French Theatre, it is true, to tack Examenens of their Plays, like a sting or *melius non tangere* to the Criticks, to the tail of them. But why need an English Author put himself to that trouble, when the learned and impartial gentlemen of the Reviews are so ready to take it off his hands, unless it were, like Dryden, to turn the thunder of the Critick's own artillery against himself, and to confute or anticipate his censures, by proving the Fable, Characters, Sentiments, and Language to be excellent, or, if indeed there were some parts of it inferior to the rest, such parts were purposely *underwritten*, in order to set off the superior to more advantage? This, indeed, Dryden has often done, and done so inimitably; that I shall not attempt it after him. To the Gentlemen, therefore, above-mentioned, the self-impanneled Jury of the English Court of Criticism, without Challenge, I put myself on my

Trial for the High Crime of writing for the Stage, trusting that their Candour will send me a good deliverance. I could, indeed, in compliance with the request of my Publisher, have obliged the Publick, by printing, entire, an original Manuscript, now in my possession, containing several strictures on the following scenes; being no other than a Letter from my Mother, occasioned by the first night's representation, which, like most other first nights, was nothing more than a Publick Rehearsal, with ten thousand fears and apprehensions, that never attend a private one. The Good Gentlewoman, hurt at the confusion, and in pain for my success, tells me with much warmth, and as dogmatically as any Male-Critick could possibly do, that She is astonished at my attempting to violate the received laws of the Drama——That the *Catastrophe* (that was really her word) is directly contrary to all known rules——That the several Characters, instead of being dismissed, one by one, should have been industriously kept together, to make a bow to the audience at the dropping of the curtain——That notwithstanding any confusion, created by the Girl's whimsical passion for Novels, in the course of the Piece, all Parties should be perfectly reconciled to each other at last. Polly, having manifested her affection for him, should, to be sure, have been married to Scribble; and the Parents should have been thoroughly, though suddenly, appeased by the declared reformation of both. Ledger might, with much propriety and great probability, have been disposed of to the Nurse: and the whole Piece, instead of concluding bluntly with a sentence in Prose, should have been tagged with a Couplet or Two; and then every thing would have gone off smoothly and roundly, *à la mode du Théâtre*.

Having thus presented the Publick with a small specimen of my good Mother's Talents for Criticism, I shall not, by attempting to answer them, heap Remarks upon Remarks; rather chusing to leave Her and all other Criticks, Male and Female, to meditate on the following extract from Ben Johnson; but must at the same

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same time, desire not to be understood to take to myself that confidence, with which He presumes to speak of his own abilities.

“ Though my Catastrophe may, in the strict rigour of Cornick Law, meet with censure ; I desire the learned and charitable Critick, to have so much Faith in me, to think it was done of industry : for, with what ease I could have varied it nearer his scale (but that I fear to boast my own faculty) I could here insert.” To this quotation I shall add a short story, and then conclude my Preface with the remainder of my good Mother’s Letter. The Story is as follows.

A Nobleman of Madrid, being present at the Spanish Comedy, fell asleep during the first act, and never woke again till the end of the play. Then rubbing his eyes, and observing his friends laughing at the hearty nap he had taken, he cried out, *How now ? Gentlemen ! What ! Is it O V E R then ? Are the Actors all MARRIED ?*

The remainder of the Letter is in these words.

“ And then I was more alarmed at this unseasonable attempt at Novelty, lest it should put it out of my power to preserve my credit with my worthy Friend, Mr. Lutestring, the silk-mercier, in Cheapside. You know, Child, that just after you had informed me of Polly Honeycombe’s being in rehearsal, a late melancholy event put the whole nation into deep Mourning. The things, which I made up three years ago, on account of the death of the Princess of Orange, having since been used on several other occasions, could by no means be render’d capable of going through the present Mourning : a six months mourning ! quite a thing impossible. This gave me some little uneasiness, especially as I had just got my Blue-Tabby cleaned for the winter’s wear. However, I did not doubt, but that, on the strength of your Farce, my good friend Lutestring would give me credit for two and twenty yards of Bombazine, to make me up a sack and petticoat ; and accordingly I went im-

A 3

“ mediately

“ mediately up to his house. When I got there, Mr.
 “ Lutestring was not at home ; but the Young Man
 “ very civilly desired me to walk into the little parlour
 “ behind the shop, till his master’s return, and there I
 “ found Mrs. Lutestring, who received me with her
 “ usual good-nature. The Good Woman was sitting
 “ alone (the Two Girls being gone, it seems, to see the
 “ scaffolding in Westminster Abbey) industriously em-
 “ ployed in making up her own Mourning ; but her
 “ Daughter’s Gowns, just come from the Mantua-
 “ Maker’s, lay in the window ; and black caps, black
 “ fans, black gloves, &c. from the milliner’s, were
 “ scattered carelessly about the table, together with
 “ three or four books, half-bound, and a bulky pam-
 “ phlet. These I had the curiosity to examine, and
 “ found them to be, (though much thumbed, and in a
 “ greasy condition, indeed, for the perusal of such fine
 “ ladies) the first volume of the Adventures of Mr.
 “ Loveil, the third volume of Betsey Thoughtless, the
 “ New Atalantis for the year 1760, and the Catalogue
 “ of the Circulating Library. The books I was too
 “ well acquainted with to be tempted to any further
 “ perusal of them ; but (on Mrs. Lutestring’s being
 “ called into the shop to speak to a particular customer)
 “ I made the inclosed Extract from the Catalogue,
 “ which, as it falls exactly in with your design, I now
 “ send for your consideration. Heaven bless you, My
 “ Dear Child ! and send that your Farce may do some
 “ good on the Giddy Girls of this Age !

 E X T R A C T.

A Accomplish’d Rake, or the modern fine Gentle-
 man.
 Adventures of Miss Polly B—ch—rd and Samuel Tyr-
 rel, Esq;

Adventures

EXTRACT.

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- Adventures of Jerry Buck.
- Adventures of Dick Hazard.
- Adventures of Jack Smart.
- Adventures of Lindamira, a Lady of Quality.
- Adventures of David Simple.
- Adventures of a Turk.
- Adventures of Daphnis and Chloe.
- Adventures of Prince Clermont and Madam de Ravezan.
- Adventures of Mr. Loveil.
- Adventures of Joseph Andrews.
- Adventures of Hamilton Murray.
- Adventures of a Rake.
- Adventures of a Cat.
- Adventures of a Black Coat.
- Adventures of Frank Hammond.
- Adventures of Mr. George Edwards, a Creole.
- Adventures of a Valet.
- Adventures of Captain Greenland.
- Adventures of Roderick Random.
- Adventures of Peregrine Pickle.
- Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom.
- Agenor and Ismena, or the War of the tender Passions.
- Amelia, by Mr. Fielding.
- Amelia, or the Distressed Wife.
- Amours of Philander and Sylvia, or Love-Letters between a Nobleman and his Sister.
- Amorous Friars, or the Intrigues of a Convent.
- Anti-Gallican, or the History and Adventures of Harry Cobham.
- Anti-Pamela, or feigned Innocence detected.
- Apparition, or Female Cavalier, a Story founded on Facts.
- Auction.
- Beauty put to its Shifts, or the Young Virgin's Rambles, being several Years Adventures of Miss * * * * in England and Portugal.
- Bracelet, or the Fortunate Discovery; being the History of Miss Polly * * *.
- Brothers.
- Bubbled Knights, or successful Contrivances; plainly evincing,

evincing, in two familiar Instances lately transacted in this Metropolis, *the Folly and Unreasonableness of Parents laying a Restraint upon their Childrens Inclinations in the Affairs of Love and Marriage.*

Card.

Chiron, or the mental Optician.

Chit-chat, or a Series of interesting Adventures.

Chrysal, or the Adventures of a Guinea, with curious Anecdotes.

Clarissa, or the History of a young Lady; comprehending the most important Concerns of private Life, and particularly shewing the Distresses that may attend the Misconduct both of Parents and Children in relation to Marriage.

Cleora, or the Fair Inconstant; an authentick History of the Life and Adventures of a Lady, lately very eminent in high Life.

Clidanor and Cecilia, a Novel, designed as a Specimen of a Collection, *adapted to form the Mind to a just Way of thinking, and a proper Manner of behaving in Life.*

Clio, or a secret History of the Amours of Mrs S--n--m.
Cry, A Dramatick Fable.

Dalinda, or the Double Marriage.

Devil upon Crutches in England, or Night Scenes in London.

Emily, or the History of a Natural Daughter.

Fair Adulterers.

Fair Moralist.

Fair Citizen, or the Adventures of Charlotte Bellmour.

Fanny, or the Amours of a West country young Lady.

Female Foundling; shewing the happy Success of constant Love, in the Life of Mademoiselle D—R—.

Female Rambler, or Adventures of Madam Janeton
De * * *

Female Banishment, or the Woman Hater.

Female Falshood.

Fortunate Villager, or Memoirs of Sir Andrew Thompson.

Fortune-Teller, or the Footman Innobled.

Friends, a *sentimental* History.

Gentleman

Gentleman and Lady of Pleasure's Amusement, in Eighty-eight Questions, with their Answers, on Love and Gallantry. To which are added, the Adventures of Sophia, with the History of Frederick and Caroline.

Henrietta.

History of Charlotte Villars.

History of Miss Kitty N ———, containing her Amours and Adventures in Scotland, Ireland, Jamaica, and England.

History of Barbarossa and Pollyane.

History of Two Persons of Quality.

History of Lavinia Rawlins.

History of two Orphans, by W. Toldervy.

History of Henry Dumont, Esq; and Miss Charlotte Evelyn; with some critical Remarks on comic Actors, by Mrs. Charke.

History of Benjamin St. Martin, a Fortunate Foundling.

History of the Life and Adventures of Mr. Anderson.

History of Honoria, or the Adventures of a young Lady; interspersed with the History of Emilia, Julia, and others.

History of Betty Barnes.

History of Jemmy and Jenny Jessamy.

History of Dicky Gotham and Doll Clod.

History of Fanny Seymour.

History of Sophia Shakespear.

History of Sir Charles Grandison.

History of a young Lady of Distinction.

History and Adventures of Frank Hammond.

History of Jasper Banks.

History of J. Trueman, Esq; and Miss Peggy Williams.

History of Sir Harry Herald and Sir Edward Haunch.

History of Will Ramble, a Libertine.

History of Miss Polly Willis.

History of my own Life.

History of Lucy Wellers.

History of a Fair Greek, who was taken out of a Seraglio at Constantinople.

History of Hai Ebor Yokdhan, an Indian Prince.

History of the human Heart, or Adventures of a young Gentleman.

History

- History of Charlotte Summers.
 History of Cornelia.
 History of Tom Jones, a Foundling.
 History of Tom Jones in his married State.
 History of two modern Adventurers.
 History of Sir Roger, and his Son Joe.
 History of Miss Sally Sable.
 History of Mira, Daughter of Marcio.
 History of Amanda, by a young Lady.
 History of a Woman of Quality, or the Adventures of
 Lady Frail.
 History of Pompey the Little, or the Adventures of a
 Lap Dog.
 History of Wilhelmina Susannah Dormer.
 History of Porcia.
 History of the Countess of Dellwya.
 History of Ophelia.
 History of the Marchioness de Pompadour, Mistress to
 the French King, and first Lady of Honour to the
 Queen.
 History of Tom Fool.
 History of the *Intrigues and Gallantries* of Christiana,
 Queen of Sweden.
 History of Jack Connor.
 History of Miss Betsey Thoughtless.
 Histories of some of the Penitents in the Magdalen
 House.
 Jilts, or Female Fortune-hunters.
 Impetuous Lover, or the Guiltless Parricide; shewing
to what Lengths Love may run, and the extreme Folly
 of forming Schemes for Futurity.
 Intriguing Coxcomb.
 Journey through every Stage of Life.
 Juvenile Adventures of David Ranger, Esq.
 Juvenile Adventures of Miss Kitty Fisher.
 Lady's Advocate, or Wit and Beauty a Match for
 Treachery and Inconstancy; containing a Series of
 Gallantries, Intrigues, and Amours, fortunate and si-
 nister; Quarrels and Reconciliations between Lovers;
 conjugal Plagues and Comforts, Vexations and En-
 dearmments; with many remarkable Incidents and
 Adventures.

EXTRACT.

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Adventures, the Effects of Love and Jealousy, Fidelity and Inconstancy.

Ladies Tales.

Life and Adventures of Miranda.

Life's Progress, or the Adventures of Natura.

Life and Adventures of Joe Thompson.

Life of Harriot Stuart.

Life of Patty Saunders.

Life and History of a Pilgrim.

Life and Adventures of Sobrina.

Life of Corporal Bates, a broken-hearted Soldier.

Life and Adventures of Coll-Jack.

Life and Adventures of James Ramble, Esq;

Life of Charles Osborn, Esq;

Life of Mr. John Van.

Life and Opinions of Miss Sukey Shandy, of Bow-Street, Gentlewoman

Love and Friendship, or the Fugitive.

Lydia.

Marriage Act.

Memoirs of the Countess of Bercki.

Memoirs of Fanny Hill.

Memoirs of a Man of Quality.

Memoirs of the Life of John Medley, Esq;

Memoirs of a Coxcomb.

Memoirs of the Shakespear's Head Tavern.

Memoirs of the celebrated Miss Fanny M——

Memoirs of B—— Tracey.

Memoirs of Fidelia and Harriot.

Memoirs of Sir Thomas Houghson and Mr. Joseph Williams.

Memoirs of an Oxford Scholar.

Memoirs of a young Lady of Quality.

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Memoirs of a certain Island.

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Mother.

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Widow of the Wood.

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£c. £c.

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. KING.

HITHER, in days of yore, from Spain or France
Came a dread Sorceress; her name, ROMANCE.

O'er Britain's Isle her wayward spells She cast,
And Common Sense in magick chain bound fast.
In mad Sublime did each fond Lover woo,
And in Heroicks ran each Billet-Doux:
High deeds of Chivalry their sole Delight,
Each Fair a Maid Distress, each Swain a Knight.
Then might Statira Orondates see,

At Tilts and Tournaments, arm'd Cap-a-pè.
She too, on Milk-white Palfrey, Lance in hand,
A Dwarf to guard her, pranc'd about the land.

This Fiend to quell, his sword Cervantes drew,
A trusty Spanish Blade, Toledo true:
Her Talismans and Magick Wand He broke ———
Knights, Genii, Castles ——— vanish'd into smoke.

But now, the dear delight of later years,
The younger Sister of ROMANCE appears:
Less solemn is her air, her drift the same,
And NOVEL her enchanting, charming, Name.
ROMANCE might strike our grave Forefather's pomp,
But NOVEL for our Buck and lively Romp!
Cassandra's Folios now no longer read,
See, Two Neat Pocket Volumes in their stead!
And then so sentimental is the Style,
So chaste, yet so bewitching all the while!
Plot, and elopement, passion, rape, and rapture,
The total sum of ev'ry dear — dear — Chapter.

'Tis not alone the Small-Talk and the Smart,
'Tis NOVEL most beguiles the Female Heart.
Miss reads—she melts—she sighs—Love steals upon her—
And then—Alas, poor Girl!—good night, poor Honour!

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" * Thus

“ * Thus of our Polly having lightly spoke,
 “ Now for our Author !—but without a joke.
 “ Though Wits and Journals, who ne’er fibb’d before,
 “ Have laid this Bantling at a certain door,
 “ Where, lying store of faults, they’d fain heap more,
 “ I now declare it, as a serious truth,
 “ ’Tis the first folly of a simple Youth,
 “ Caught and deluded by our barlot plays :——
 “ Then crush not in the shell this infant Bayes !
 “ Exert your favour to a young Beginner,
 “ Nor use the Stripling like a Batter’d Sinner !

* These Lines were added by Mr. GARRICK, on its being reported, that he was the Author of this Piece: and, however humorous and poetical, contain as strict matter of fact as the dullest Prose.

P E R S O N S.

HONEYCOMBE,

Mr. YATES.

LEDGER,

Mr. BRANSHY.

SCRIBBLE,

Mr. KING.

Mrs. HONEYCOMBE,

Mrs. KENNEDY.

POLLY,

Miss POPE.

NURSE,

Mrs. BRADSHAW.

POLLY

POLLY HONEYCOMBE,

A Dramatic NOVEL of One ACT.

SCENE I. *An Apartment in HONEYCOMBE'S House.*

POLLY, *with a Book in her Hand.*

WELL said, Sir George!—O the dear man!—
 But so——“ With these words the enraptured baronet [*reading*] concluded his declaration of love.”—So!——“ But what heart can imagine, [*reading*] what tongue describe, or what pen delineate, the amiable confusion of Emilia.”—Well! now for it!——“ Reader, if thou art a courtly reader, thou hast seen at polite tables, iced cream crimsoned with raspberries; or, if thou art an uncourtly reader, thou hast seen the rosy-fingered morning, dawning in the golden east!”——Dawning in the golden east!——Very pretty!——“ Thou hast seen, perhaps [*reading*] the artificial vermilion on the cheeks of Cleora, or the vermilion of nature on those of Sylvia; thou hast seen—in a word, the lovely face of Emilia was overspread with blushes.—This is a most beautiful passage, I protest! Well, a Novel for my money! Lord, lord, my stupid Papa has no taste. He has no notion of humour, and character, and the sensibility of delicate feeling. [*affectedly*] And then Mama,—but where was I?—Oh here——“ Overspread with blushes.” [*reading*]. “ Sir George, touched at her confusion, gently seized

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“ her

“ her hand, and softly pressing it to his bosom, [*acting it as she reads*] where the pulses of his heart beat quick, throbbing with tumultuous passion, in a plaintive tone of voice breathed out, Will you not answer me, Emilia?”—Tender creature!—“ She, half raising [*reading and acting*] her downcast eyes, and half inclining her averted head, said in faltering accents—Yes, Sir!” Well, now!—“ Then gradually recovering with ineffable sweetness she prepared to address him; when Mrs. Jenkinson bounced into the room, threw down a set of china in her hurry, and strewed the floor with porcelain fragments: then turning Emilia round and round, whirled her out of the apartment in an instant, and struck Sir George dumb with astonishment at her appearance. She raved; but the baronet resuming his accustomed effrontery—

Enter Nurse.

Oh, Nurse, I am glad to see you,—Well, and how—

Nur. Well, Chicken!

Pol. Tell me, tell me all this instant. Did you see him? Did you give him my letter? Did he write? Will he come? Shall I see him? Have you got the answer in your pocket? Have you—

Nur. Blessings on her, how her tongue runs!

Pol. Nay but come, dear Nurse, tell me, what did he say?

Nur. Say? why he took the letter—

Pol. Well!

Nur. And kiss'd it a thousand times, and read it a thousand times, and—

Pol. Oh charming!

Nur. And ran about the room, and blest himself, and, heaven preserve us, curst himself, and—

Pol. Very fine! very fine!

Nur. And vowed he was the most miserable creature upon earth, and the happiest man in the world, and—

Pol. Prodigious! fine! excellent! my dear dear Nurse! [*Kissing her.*] Come, give me the letter.

Nur. Letter, Chicken! what letter?

Pol. The answer to mine. Come then! [*Impatiently.*]

Nur. I have no letter. He had such a *peramble* to write, by my troth I could not stay for it.

Pol. Pshaw!

Nur. How soon you're affronted now! he said he'd send it some time to-day.

Pol. Send it some time to-day!—I wonder now, [*as if musing.*] how he will convey it. Will he squeeze it, as he did the last, into the chicken-house in the garden? Or will he write it in lemon-juice, and send it in a book, like blank paper? Or will he throw it into the house, inclosed in an orange? Or will he—

Nur. Heavens bless her, what a sharp wit she has!

Pol. I have not read so many books for nothing. Novels, Nurfee, Novels! A Novel is the only thing to teach a girl life, and the way of the world, and elegant fancies, and love to the end of the chapter.

Nur. Yes, yes, you are always reading your simple story-books. The *Ventures* of Jack this, and the history of Betsy t'other, and sir Humphrys, and women with hard christian names. You had better read your prayer-book, Chicken.

Pol. Why so I do; but I'm reading this now—[*Looking into the book.*] “She raved, but the baronet”—I really think I love Mr. Scribble as well as Emilia did sir George.—Do you think, Nurfee, I should have had such a good notion of love so early, if I had not read Novels?—Did not I make a conquest of Mr. Scribble in a single night at a dancing? But my cross Papa will hardly ever let me go out.—And then, I know life as well as if I had been in the Beau Monde all my days. I can tell the nature of a masquerade as well as if I had been at twenty. I long for a mobbing scheme with Mr. Scribble to the two-shilling gallery, or a snug party a little way out of town, in a post-chaise——and then, I have such a head full of intrigues and contrivances! Oh, Nurfee, a Novel is the only thing.

Nur. Contrivances! ay, marry, you have need of contrivances. Here are your Papa and Mama fully

resolved to marry you to young Mr. Ledger, Mr. Simeon the rich Jew's wife's nephew, and all the while your head runs upon nothing but Mr. Scribble.

Pol. A fiddle-stick's end for Mr. Ledger! I tell you what, Nursee. I'll marry Mr. Scribble, and not marry Mr. Ledger, whether Papa and Mama chuse it or no— And how do you think I'll contrive it?

Nur. How? Chicken!

Pol. Why, don't you know?

Nur. No, indeed.

Pol. And can't you guess?

Nur. No, by my troth, not I.

Pol. O lord, it's the commonest thing in the world. — I intend to elope.

Nur. Elope! Chicken, what's that?

Pol. Why, in the vulgar phrase, run away, — that's all.

Nur. Mercy on us! — Run away!

Pol. Yes, run away, to be sure. Why there's nothing in that, you know. Every girl elopes, when her parents are obstinate and ill-natured about marrying her. It was just so with Betsy Thompson, and Sally Wilkins, and Clarinda, and Leonora in the history of Dick Careless, and Julia in the Adventures of Tom Ramble, and fifty others—Did not they all elope? and so will I too. I have as much right to elope, as they had, for I have as much love and as much spirit as the best of them.

Nur. Why, Mr. Scribble's a fine man to be sure, a gentleman every inch of him!

Pol. So he is, a dear charming man! — Will you elope too, Nursee?

Nur. Not for the varshal world. Suppose now, Chicken, your Papa and Mama —

Pol. What care I for Papa and Mama? Have not they been married and happy long enough ago? and are not they still coaxing, and fondling, and kissing each other all the day long? — Where's my dear Love, [*mimicking*] My Beauty? says Papa, hobbling along with his crutch-headed cane, and his old gouty legs: Ah, my sweeting, my precious Mr. Honeycombe, d'ye

d'ye love your nown dear wife? says Mama; and then they squeeze their hard hands to each other, and their old eyes twinkle, and they're as loving as Darby and Joan—especially if Mama has had a cordial or two—Eh! Nursee!

Nur. Oh fie, Chicken!

Pol. And then perhaps, in comes my utter aversion, Mr. Ledger, with his news from the Change, and his Change-alley wit, and his thirty *per cent.* [*mimicking.*] and stocks have risen one and a half and three eighths. —I'll tell ye what, Nursee! they would make fine characters for a Novel, all three of them.

Nur. Ah, you're a graceless bird!—But I must go down stairs, and watch if the coast's clear, in case of a letter.

Pol. Could not you go to Mr. Scribble's again after it?

Nur. Again! indeed, Mrs. Hot-upon't!

Pol. Do now, my dear Nursee, pray do! and call at the Circulating Library, as you go along, for the rest of this Novel—The History of Sir George Truman and Emilia—and tell the bookseller to be sure to send me the British Amazon, and Tom Faddle, and the rest of the new Novels this winter, as soon as ever they come out.

Nur. Ah, pise on your naughty novels! I say. [*Exit.*]

Pol. Ay, go now, my dear Nursee, go, there's a good woman!——What an old fool it is! with her pise on it—and fie, Chicken—and no, by my troth—[*mimicking.*]——Lord! what a strange house I live in! not a soul in it, except myself, but what are all queer animals, quite droll creatures. There's Papa and Mama, and the old foolish Nurse——[*Re-enter NURSE with a band-box.*] Oh, Nursee, what brings you back so soon? What have you got there?

Nur. Mrs. Commode's 'prentice is below, and has brought home your new cap and ruffles, Chicken!

Pol. Let me see—let me see—[*opening the box.*] Well, I swear this is a mighty pretty cap, a sweet pair of flying lappets! Aren't they, Nursee?——Ha! what's this? [*looking into the box.*]——Oh charming!

a letter!

a letter! did not I tell you so?—Let's see—let's see—*(opening the letter hastily—it contains three or four sheets)* “Joy of my Soul—only hope—eternal bliss” —*[dipping into different places.]* The cruel blasts of “coyness and disdain blow out the flame of love, “but then the virgin breath of kindness and compassion—on blows it in again.”—Prodigious pretty! is'nt it, Nurse? *[turning over the leaves]*

Nur. Yes, that is pretty,—but what a deal there is on't! It's an old saying and a true one, the more there's said the less there's done. Ah, they wrote other guess sort of letters, when I was a girl! *[while she talks Polly reads.]*

Pol. Lord, Nurse, if it was not for Novels and Love-letters, a girl would have no use for her writing and reading.—But what's here? *[reading.]* Poetry!—Well may I cry out with Alonzo in the Revenge—

“—Where didst thou steal those eyes? From heaven?
“Thou didst, and 'tis religion to adore them!”

Excellent! oh! he's a dear man!

Nur. Ay, to be sure!—But you forget your letter-carrier below, she'll never bring you another, if you don't speak to her kindly.

Pol. Speak to her! why I'll give her sixpence, woman! Tell her I am coming.—I will but just read my letter over five or six times, and go to her.—Oh, he's a charming man! *[reading.]* Very fine! very pretty!—He writes as well as Bob Lovelace—*[kissing the letter.]* Oh, dear, sweet Mr. Scribble! *[Exit.]*

Scene changes to another Apartment.

Honeycombe and Mrs. Honeycombe at Breakfast—
Honeycombe reading the News Paper.

Mrs. Hon. My dear! *[peevishly.]*

Hon. What d'ye say, my Love? *[still reading.]*

Mrs. Hon. You take no notice of me.—Lay by that silly paper—put it down—come then—drink your tea.—You don't love me now.

Hon.

POLLY HONEYCOMBE.

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Hon. Ah! my beauty! [*looking very fondly.*]

Mrs. Hon. Do you love your own dear wife?

[*tenderly.*]

Hon. Dearly.—She knows I do.—Don't you my Beauty?

Mrs. Hon. Ah, you're a dear, dear man! [*rising and kissing him.*] He does love her—and he's her own husband—and she loves him most dearly and tenderly—that she does. [*kissing him.*]

Hon. My Beauty! I have a piece of news for you.

Mrs. Hon. What is it: my Sweeting!

Hon. The paper here says, that young Tom Seaton, of Aldersgate-Street, was married yesterday at Bow Church, to Miss Fairly of Cornhill

Mrs. Hon. A flaunting, flaring hussy! she a husband—

Hon. But what does my Beauty think of her own daughter?

Mrs. Hon. Of our Polly? Sweeting!

Hon. Ay, Polly: What sort of a wife d'ye think he'll make? my Love!—I concluded every thing with Mr Simeon yesterday, and expect Mr. Ledger every minute

Mrs. Hon. Think, my Sweetings!—why, I think, she loves him half so well as I do my own dear man, he'll never suffer him out of her sight—that she'll look at him with pleasure—[*they both ggle fondly.*]—and love him—and kiss him—and fondle him—oh, my dear, it's impossible to say how dearly I love you. [*kissing and nodding.*]

Enter Ledger.

Led. Heyday! what now, good folks, what now? are you so much in arrear? or are you paying off principal and interest both at once?

Hon. My dear!—Confider—Mr. Ledger is—

Mrs. Hon. What signifies Mr. Ledger?—He is one of the family, you know, my Sweeting!

Led. Ay, so I am,—never mind me—never mind me.—Tho' by the by I should be glad of somebody to make much of me too. Where's Miss Polly?

Hon. That's right—that's right—Here, John!

Enter

Enter John.

Where's Polly?

John. In her own room, Sir.

Hon. Tell her to come here—and hark ye, John! while Mr. Ledger stays, I am not at home to any body else. *[Exit John.]*

Led. Not at home!—are those your ways?—If I was to give such a message to my servant, I shou'd expect a commission of bankruptcy out against me the next day.

Hon. Ay, you men of large dealings—it was so with me, when I was in business.—But where's this girl? what can she be about?—My Beauty, do step yourself, and send her here immediately.

Mrs. Hon. I will, my Sweeting! *[offering to kiss him.]*

Hon. Nay, my Love, not now—

Mrs. Hon. Why not now?—I will. *[kissing him.]*
Good bye, Love.—Mr Ledger, your servant!—Bye, Dearest! *[Exit.]*

Hon. Ha! ha! you see, Mr. Ledger! you see what you are to come too—but I beg pardon—I quite forgot—have you breakfasted?

Led. Breakfasted! ay, four hours ago, and done an hundred tickets since, over a dish of coffee at Garraway's—Let me see, *[pulling out his Watch.]* bless my soul, it's eleven o'clock! I wish Miss would come.—It's Transfer-Day—I must be at the Bank before twelve without fail.

Hon. Oh, here she comes.—*[Enter Polly.]*—Come, Child! where have you been all this time?—Well, Sir, I'll leave you together.—Polly, you'll—ha! ha! ha!—Your servant, Mr. Ledger, your servant! *[Exit.]*

[Polly and Ledger remain—they stand at a great distance from each other.]

Pol. [Aside.] What a monster of a man!—What will the frightful creature say to me?—I am now, for all the world, just in the situation of poor Clarissa,—and the wretch is ten times uglier than Soames himself.

Led. Well, Miss!

Pol. [Aside.] He speaks! what shall I say to him?—Suppose I have a little sport with him.—I will.—I'll in-
dulge

dulge myself with a few airs of distant flirtation at first, and then treat him like a dog. I'll use him worse than Nancy Howe ever did Mr. Hickman.—Pray, sir, [*to Ledger.*] Did you ever read the History of Emilia?

Led. Not I, Miss, not I.—I have no time to think of such things, not I.—I hardly ever read any thing, except the Daily Advertiser, or the list at Lloyd's—nor write neither, except its my name now and then.—I keep a dozen clerks for nothing in the world else but to write.

Pol. A dozen clerks!—Prodigious!

Led. Ay, a dozen clerks. Business must be done, Miss!—We have large returns, and the ballance must be kept on the right side, you know.—In regard to last year now—Our returns, from the first of January to the last of December, fifty-nine, were to the amount of sixty thousand pounds, sterling. We clear upon an average, at the rate of twelve *per cent.* Cast up the twelves in sixty thousand, and you may make a pretty good guess at our net profits.

Pol. Net Profits!

Led. Ay, miss, net profits.—Simeon and Ledger are names as well known, as any in the Alley, and good for as much at the bottom of a piece of paper.—But no matter for that—you must know that I have an account to settle with you, Miss.—You're on the debtor side in my books, I can tell you, Miss.

Pol. I in your debt, Mr. Ledger!

Led. Over head and ears in my debt, Miss!

Pol. I hate to be in debt of all things—pray let me discharge you at once—for I can't endure to be dunn'd.

Led. Not so fast, Miss! not so fast. Right reckoning makes long friends.—Suppose now we should compound this matter, and strike a ballance in favour of both parties.

Pol. How d'ye mean? Mr. Ledger!

Led. Why then in plain English, Miss, I love you—I'll marry you—My uncle Simeon and Mr. Honeycombe have settled the matter between them—I am fond of the match—and hope you are the same—There's the Sum Total.

Pol.

Pol. Lord, this is so strange!—Besides, is it possible that I can have any charms for Mr. Ledger?

Ledg. Charms! Miss; you are all over charms.—I like you—I like your person, your family, your fortune—I like you altogether—the Omniums—Eh, Miss!—I like the Omniums—and don't care how large a premium I give for them.

Pol. Lord, sir!

Ledg. Come, Miss, let's both set our hands to it, and sign and seal the agreement, without loss of time, or hindrance of business.

Pol. Not so fast, sir, not so fast.—Right Reckoning makes long friends, you know——Mr. Ledger!

Ledg. Miss!

Pol. After so explicit and polite a declaration on your part, you will expect, no doubt, some suitable returns on mine.

Ledg. To be sure, Miss, to be sure—ay, ay, let's examine the *per contra*.

Pol. What you have said, Mr. Ledger, has, I take it for granted been very sincere.

Ledg. Very sincere, upon my credit, Miss!

Pol. For my part then, I must declare, however unwillingly——

Ledg. Out with it, Miss!

Pol. That the passion I entertain for you is equally strong——

Ledg. Oh brave!

Pol. And that I do with equal or more sincerity——

Ledg. Thank you, Miss; thank you!

Pol. Hate and detest——

Ledg. How! How!

Pol. Loath and abhor you——

Ledg. What! what!

Pol. Your sight is shocking to me, your conversation odious, and your passion contemptible——

Ledg. Mighty well, Miss; mighty well!

Pol. You are a vile book of arithmetick, a table of pounds, shillings, and pence—You are uglier than a figure of eight, and more tiresome than the multiplication-table.—There's the Sum Total.

Ledg.

Ledg. Flesh and blood——

Pol. Don't talk to me—Get along—Or if you don't leave the room, I will.

Ledg. Very fine, very fine, Miss!—Mr. *Honeycombe* shall know this. [Exit.

Polly (alone.) Ha! ha! ha!—There he goes!—Ha! ha! ha!—I have out-topped them all—Miss *Howe*, *Narcissa*, *Clarinda*, *Polly Barnes*, *Sophy Willis*, and all of them. None of them ever treated an odious fellow with half so much spirit—This would make an excellent chapter in a new Novel—But here comes Papa—In a violent passion, no doubt—No matter—It will only furnish materials for the next chapter.

Enter Honeycombe.

Hon. What is the meaning, mistress *Polly*, of this extraordinary behaviour? How dare you treat Mr. *Ledger* so ill, and behave so undutifully to your Papa and Mama?—You are a spoilt child—Your Mama and I have been too fond of you—But have a care, young madam! mend your conduct, or you may be sure we'll make you repent on't.

Pol. Lord, Papa, how can you be so angry with me?—I am as dutiful as any girl in the world—But there's always an uproar in the family about marrying the daughter, and now poor I must suffer in my turn.

Hon. Hark ye, Miss!—Why did not you receive Mr. *Ledger* as your lover?

Pol. Lover!—Oh, dear Papa!—He has no more of a lover about him!—He never so much as cast one languishing look towards me, never once press'd my hand, or struck his breast, or threw himself at my feet, or—Lord, I read such a delightful declaration of love in the new Novel this morning! first, Papa, sir *George Trueman*——

Hon. Devil take sir *George Trueman*!—these cursed Novels have turned the girl's head—Hark ye, hussy! I could almost find in my heart to—I say, hussy, isn't Mr. *Ledger* a husband of your Papa and Mama's providing?

C

Ledg.

ding? and ar'n't they the properest persons to dispose of you?

Pol. Dispose of me!—See there now!—Why you have no notion of these things, Papa!—Your head's so full of trade and commerce, that you would dispose of your daughter like a piece of merchandise—But my heart is my own property, and at nobody's disposal, but my own—Sure you would not consign me, like a bale of silk, to *Ledger* and Co—Eh! Papa!

Hon. Her impudence amazes me—Hark ye, huffy, you're an undutiful Slut—

Pol. Not at all undutiful, Papa!—But I hate Mr. *Ledger*—I can't endure the sight of him—

Hon. This is beyond all patience—Hark ye, huffy, I'll—

Pol. Nay, more; to tell you the whole truth, my heart is devoted to another. I have an insuperable passion for him; and nothing shall shake my affection for my dear Mr. *Scribble*.

Hon. Mr. *Scribble*!—Who's Mr. *Scribble*?—Hark ye, huffy, I'll turn you out of doors—I'll have you confin'd to your chamber—Get out of my sight—I'll have you lock'd up this instant.

Pol. Lock'd up! I thought so. Whenever a poor girl refuses to marry any horrid creature, her parents provide for her, then she's to be locked up immediately.—Poor *Clarissa*! poor *Sophy Western*! I am now going to be treated just as you have been before me.

Hon. Those abominable books!—Hark ye, huffy! you shall have no Novel to amuse you—Get along, I say—Nor no pen and ink to scrawl letters—Why don't you go?—Nor no trusty companion—Get along—I'll have you lock'd up this instant, and the key of your chamber shall be in your Mama's custody.

Pol. Indeed, Papa, you need not give my Mama so much trouble—I have—

Hon. Get along, I say.

Pol. I have read of such things as ladders of ropes—

Hon. Out of my sight!

Pol.

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Pol. Or of escaping out of a window by tying the sheets together.—

Hon. Hark ye, hussy.—

Pol. Or of throwing one's self into the street upon a feather-bed.—

Hon. I'll turn you out of doors.—

Pol. Or of being catch'd in a gentleman's arms.—

Hon. Zouns, I'll —

Pol. Or of —

Hon. Will you be gone? [Exeunt, both talking.]

Scene changes to Polly's apartment.

Enter Scribble, disguised in a livery.

So!—In this disguise mistress Nurse has brought me hither safe and undiscovered—Now for Miss *Polly*! here's her letter: a true picture of her nonsensical self! —“To my dearest Mr. *Scribble*.” [Reading the direction.] And the Seal two Doves billing, with this motto:

“We two,
“When we woove,
“Bill and cooe.”

—Pretty!—And a plain proof I shan't have much trouble with her—I'll make short work on't—I'll carry her off to-day, if possible—Clap up a marriage at once, and then down upon our marrow-bones, and ask pardon and blessing of Papa and Mama. [Noise without.] Here she comes.

Hon. (without) Get along, I say,—Up to your own chamber, hussy!

Pol. (without) Well, Papa, I am—

Scrib. O the devil!—Her father coming up with her!—What shall I do? [Running about] Where shall I hide myself?—I shall certainly be discover'd—I'll get up the chimney—Zouns! they are just here—Ten to one the old cuss may not stay with her—I'll pop into this closet. [Exit.]

Enter Honeycombe and Polly.

Hon. Here, mistress Malapert, stay here, if you please, and chew the cud of disobedience and mischief in private.

Pol. Very well, Papa!

Hon. Very well!—What! you are sulky now! Hark ye, hussy, you are a saucy minx, and it's not very well.—I have a good mind to keep you upon bread and water this month. I'll—I'll—But I'll say no more—I'll lock you up, and carry the key to your Mama—She'll take care of you—You will have Mr. Scribble—Let's see how he can get to you now? [*Shewing the key.*]

[*Exit, locking the door.*]

Pol. (alone) And so I will have Mr. Scribble too, do what you can, old Squaretoes! I am provided with pen, ink, and paper, in spite of their teeth—I remember that *Clarissa* had cunning drawers made on purpose to secure those things, in case of an accident—I am very glad I have had caution enough to provide myself with the same implements of intrigue, though with a little more ingenuity—Indeed now they make standishes, and tea-chests, and dressing-boxes, in all sorts of shapes and figures—But mine are of my own invention—Here I've got an excellent ink horn in my pin-cushion—and a case of pens and some paper in my fan. [*Produces them.*] I will write to Mr. Scribble immediately. I shall certainly see him eaves-dropping about our door the first opportunity, and then I'll toss it to him out of the window. [*Sits down to write.*]

Scribble putting his head out of the door of the closet.

A clear coast, I find—The old codger's gone, and has lock'd me up with his daughter—So much the better!—Pretty Soul! what is she about? Writing?—A letter to me, I'll bet ten to one—I'll go and answer it in *propria persona*.

[*Comes forward, and stands behind Polly, looking over her writing.*]

Pol.

Pol. (writing) "Me—in—your—Arms."—Let me see—What have I written? [*Reading.*] "My dearest dear, Mr. Scribble."

Scrib. I thought so!

Pol. (reading) "I am now writing in the most cruel confinement. Fly then, oh fly to me on the wings of love, release me from this horrid gaol, and imprison me in your arms."

Scrib. That I will with all my heart. [*Embracing her.*]

Pol. Oh! [*Screaming.*]

Scrib. O the devil!—why do you scream so?—I shall be discovered in spite of fortune. [*running about.*]

Pol. Bless me! is it you? Hush! [*running to the door.*] here's my father coming up stairs; I protest.

Scrib. What the duce shall I do?—I'll run into the closet again.

Pol. O no! he'll search the closet—Lord, here's no time to—he's here—get under the table—[*Scribble hides.*] Lie still—What shall I say? [*Sits down by the table.*]

Enter Honeycombe.

Hon. How now? Huffy!—What's all this noise?

Pol. Sir! [*Affecting surprise.*]

Hon. What made you scream so violently?

Pol. Scream! Papa?

Hon. Scream? Papa!—Ay, scream, huffy!—What made you scream? I say.

Pol. Lord, Papa, I have never opened my lips, but have been in a philosophical reverie ever since you left me.

Hon. I am sure I thought I heard—But how now, huffy! what's here?—pens—ink—and paper!—Hark ye, huffy!—How came you by these?—So! so! fine contrivances!—[*examining them*]—And a letter begun too—"cruel confinement—wings of love—your arms." [*reading*] Ah, you forward slut!—But I am glad I have discovered this—I'll seize these moveables—So! so! now write, if you can—Nobody shall come near you—Send to him, if you can—Now see how Mr. Scribble will get at you—Now I have you safe, mistress!—and

now—ha! ha!—now you may make love to the table.

[Exit, locking the door.]

Pol. So I will—We'll turn the tables upon you.
Come, Mr. *Scribble*!

Scrib. Here am I, my love!—This is lucky, and droll too—Under the table! ha! ha! ha!—this is like making love in a pantomime—But, my dear, you should not have screamed so.

Pol. Lord, who thought of you?—I was as much surprised as *Sophy Western*, when she saw *Tom Jones* in the looking-glass—But what brought you here?

Scrib. Love.

Pol. What put you into that habit?

Scrib. You and Love, my dear *Polly*, You—I wear your livery.

Pol. Lord! how well it becomes him!—But why a livery? Mr. *Scribble*.

Scrib. Only to carry on our affair more securely—a little amour in masquerade—Do you know me? [mimicking.]

Pol. Comical creature!—But how did you get here?

Scrib. Under this disguise, I pretended business to the Nurse, and she brought me hither.

Pol. Admirable!—this is a most charming Adventure.

Scrib. Isn't it.

Pol. And have you really a sincere passion for me?

Scrib. A sincere passion!—true as the needle to the pole, or the dial to the sun.—

Pol. But, Mr. *Scribble*!

Scrib. My dear!

Pol. D'ye think I am as handsome as *Clarissa*, or *Clementina*, or *Pamela*, or *Sophy Western*, or *Amelia*, or *Narcissa*, or—

Scrib. Handsome!—you are a constellation of all their beauties blended together—*Clarissa*, and *Sophy*, and the rest of them, were but mere types of you—But, my little Charmer, what was the meaning of all that uproar I heard just now, and of your being locked up in this manner?

Pol. You.

Scrib. I?

Pol.

Pol. Yes, you. You was the meaning of it. They brought me an odious fellow for an husband; and so I told them that he was my utter aversion; that I was enamoured with you, and you alone, and that my attachment was inviolable to my dear Mr. *Scribble*.

Scrib. The duce you did! You need not blush to own your passion for me, to be sure—But things were not quite ripe for that yet.

Pol. Yes, but they were ripe, and ripe enough.—What d'ye think I don't know how to manage for the best?

Scrib. O to be sure! but then this being kept under lock and key, like the old Curmudgeon's strong box, spoils the finest scheme.

Pol. What scheme?

Scrib. Why, a scheme to bring matters to issue at once. I was in hopes of securing you for ever, this very day.—I intended to have stolen sily down stairs with you, made a silent escape into the street, have squeezed you into a chair in a twinkling, had you conveyed to my lodging, and have strutted thither with a "By your leave, gemmin!" before your chair, in this livery.

Pol. A most excellent contrivance!—We must put it in execution—How can we manage it?—Let's make our escape out of the window!

Scrib. I must beg to be excused.

Pol. Let us force the lock then—or take off the screws of it—or suppose we should contrive to—
[noise at the door.]

Scrib. 'Sdeath! here's somebody coming.

Pol. Hush!—Stay!—[running to the door and peeping through the key-hole.]—O no! it's only Nurse.

After unlocking the door, Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Well, Chicken!—Where's Mr. *Scribble*?

Scrib. O, Mrs. Nurse, is it you?—I am heartily glad to see you.

Pol. Oh Nurse! you frightened us out of our little wits.—I thought it had been Papa or Mama.

Nurse.

Nurse. Ah, Chicken, I've taken care of your Mama — But I must not stay long — Mr. *Honeycombe* brought her the key in a parlous fury, with orders to let nobody go near you, except himself. — But I — I can't chuse but laugh — I prevailed on Madam to take a glass extraordinary of her Cordial, and have left her fast asleep in her own chamber.

Pol. The luckiest thing in the world! — Now, Mr. *Scribble*, we may put your stratagem in practice this instant.

Scrib. With all my heart. — I wish we were out of the house.

Pol. Away, away then!

Nurse. Softly, Chicken, softly! — Let me go before, to see that there's nobody in the way. Come gently down stairs. I'll set open the door of your cage, and then you may take wing as fast as you please. — Ah, you're a sweet pair of turtles! Come along.

Scrib. Turtles indeed! Come, my Dear! — We two, when we wooe, bill and cooe.

Pol. Very well! — You're to walk before my chair, remember! — This is the finest adventure I ever had in my life!

[*Exeunt, following the Nurse.*]

Scene changes to Mrs. Honeycombe's Apartment.

Mrs. Honeycombe alone, — several phials on the table, with labels.

I am not at all well to-day. — [*yawns, as if just waking.*] — Such a quantity of tea in the morning, makes one quite Nervous — and Mr *Honeycombe* does not chuse it qualified. — I have such a dizziness in my head, it absolutely turns round with me. — I don't think neither that the Hyterick Water is warm enough for my stomach. — I must speak to Mr. *Julep* to order me something rather more comfortable.

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Did you call, Ma'am?

Mrs.

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Mrs. Hon. Oh Nurse, is it you — No, I did not call — Where's Mr. Honeycombe?

Nurse. Below stairs in the parlour, Madam. — I did not think she'd have wak'd so soon — If she should miss the key now, before I've an opportunity to lay it down again! [*Aside.*]

Mrs. Hon. What d'ye say? Nurse!

Nurse. Say? Ma'am! — Say! — I say, I hope you're a little better, Ma'am!

Mrs. Hon. Oh Nurse, I am perfectly giddy with my Nerves, and so low-spirited.

Nurse. Poor gentlewoman! suppose I give you a sup out of the case of *Italian* Cordials, Ma'am! that was sent as a present from Mr. What-d'ye-call-him, in Crutched-Fryars — The *Italian* merchant with the long name.

Mrs. Hon. Filthy poison! don't mention it! — Faugh! I hate the very names of them. — You know, Nurse, I never touch any Cordials, but what come from the Apothecary's — What o'Clock is it? — Isn't it time to take my Draught?

Nurse. By my troth, I believe it is — Let me see, I believe this is it — [*Takes up a phial, and slips the key upon the table.*] “The Stomachick Draught to be taken an hour before dinner. For Mrs. Honeycombe.” [*reading the label.*] — Ay, this is it — By my troth, I am glad I've got rid of the key again. [*Aside.*]

Mrs. Hon. Come then! — Pour it into a tea cup and give, it me. — I'm afraid I can't take it. It goes sadly against me.

While she is drinking, Honeycombe without.

Run, John, run! — After them immediately! — Harry, do you run too — Stick close to Mr. Ledger — Don't return without them for your life!

Nurse. Good lack! good lack! they're discovered, as sure as the day. [*Aside.*]

Mrs. Hon. Lord, Nurse, what's the matter?

Nurse. I don't know, by my troth.

Enter

Enter Honeycombe.

Mrs. *Hon.* O, my Sweeting, I am glad you are come.—I was so frightened about you. [*Rises, and seems disorder'd.*]

Hon. Zouns, my dear——

Mrs. *Hon.* O don't swear, my Dearest!

Hon. Zouns, it's enough to make a parson swear——
You have let *Polly* escape——She's run away with a fellow.

Mrs. *Hon.* You perfectly astonish me, my dear!——
I can't possibly conceive——My poor head aches too to
such a degree——Where's the key of her chamber?
[*Seems disorder'd.*]

Nurse. Here, Madam, here it is.

Hon. Zouns, I tell you——

Mrs. *Hon.* Why here's the key, my Sweeting! It's
absolutely impossible—it has lain here ever since you
brought it me—not a soul has touched it—have they,
Nurse? [*disordered.*]

Nurse. Not a creature, I'll take my Bible oath on't.

Hon. I tell you, she's gone.—I'm sure on't—Mr.
Ledger saw a strange footman put her into a chair, at
the corner of the street—and He and *John*, and a whole
Posse, are gone in pursuit of them.

Mrs. *Hon.* This is the most extraordinary circum-
stance—It's quite beyond my comprehension——But
my Sweeting must not be angry with his own dear wife
—it was not her fault. [*fondling.*]

Hon. Nay, my Love, don't trifle now!——

Mrs. *Hon.* I must——I will——

Hon. Zouns, my Dear, be quiet!—I shall have my
girl ruined for ever.

Led. (*without.*) This way—this way—bring them
along!

Hon. Hark! they're coming—Mr. *Ledger* has over-
taken them—they're here.

Led. (*without.*) Here!—Mr. *Honeycombe* is in this
room——Come along!

Enter

Enter Ledger, Polly, and Scribble, with Servants.

Ledg. Here they are, Mr. *Honeycombe*!—We've brought them back again.—Here they are, Madam.

Hon. Hark ye, huffy! I have a good mind to turn you out of doors again immediately.—You are a disgrace to your family.—You're a shame to——

Mrs. Hon. Stay, my dear, don't you put yourself into such a passion!—*Polly*, observe what I say to you—Let me know the whole circumstances of this affair—I don't at all understand—Tell me, I say

—— [*Disorder'd.*]

Hon. Zouns! I have no patience.—Hark ye, huffy!—Where was you going?—Who does this fellow belong to?—Where does he live?—Who is he?

Polly. That gentleman, Papa, is Mr. *Scribble*.

Hon. This! is this Mr. *Scribble*?

Scrib. The very man, sir, at your service—An humble admirer of Miss *Honeycombe's*.

Polly. Yes, Papa, that's Mr. *Scribble*.—The sovereign of my heart—The sole object of my affections.

Mrs. Hon. What can be the meaning of all this?

Hon. Why you beggarly slut!—What, would you run away from your family with a fellow in livery? a footman?

Polly. A footman! ha! ha! ha! very good; a footman!

Scrib. A footman, eh, my dear!—An errand boy!—A scoundrel fellow in livery—A good joke, faith! [*Laughing with Polly.*]

Polly. Why, Papa, don't you know that every gentleman disguises himself in the course of an amour?—Don't you remember that *Bob Lovelace* disguised himself like an old man? And *Tom Ramble* like an old woman?—No Adventure can be carried on without it.

Hon. She's certainly mad—stark mad.—Hark ye, sir! Who are you?—I'll have you sent to the Compter—You shall give an account of yourself before my Lord Mayor.

Scrib.

Enter

Scrib. What care I for my Lord-Mayor, or the whole court of Aldermen?—Hark ye, old Greybeard, I am a gentleman—A gentleman as well known as any in the city.

Mrs. Hon. Upon my word, I believe so.—He seems a very proper gentleman-like young person.

Led. As well known as any in the city!—I don't believe it—He's no good man—I am sure he's not known upon Change.

Scrib. Damme, sir, what d'ye mean?

Led. Oh ho! Mr. Gentleman, is it you?—I thought I knew your voice—Ay, and your face too.—Pray, sir, don't you live with Mr. *Traverse*, the attorney, of *Gracechurch-Street*?—Did not you come to me last week about a policy of insurance?

Scrib. O the Devil! [*aside.*] I come to you? sir!—I never saw your face before. [*to Ledger.*]

Nurse. Good lack! he'll certainly be discovered. [*aside.*]

Hon. An attorney's clerk!—Hark ye, friend—

Scrib. 'Egad, I'd best sneak off before it's worse. [*going.*]

Hon. Hark ye, woman! [*to Nurse.*]—I begin to suspect—Have not I heard you speak of a kinsman, clerk to Mr. *Traverse*?—Stop him!

Scrib. Hands off, Gentlemen!—Well then—I do go through a little business for Mr. *Traverse*—What then? What have you to say to me now? sir!

Polly. Do pray, Mama, take Mr. *Scribble's* part, pray do!

Nurse. Do, ma'am, speak a good word for him.

Mrs. Hon. I understand nothing at all of the matter.

Hon. Hark ye, Woman!—He's your nephew—I'm sure on't—I'll turn you out of doors immediately.—You shall be—

Nurse. I beg upon my knees that your honour would forgive me—I meant no harm, Heaven above knows—

[*Nurse kneeling.*
Hon.

Hon. No harm! what to marry my daughter to—
I'll have you sent to Newgate—And you, [*to Polly.*]
you sorry baggage; d'ye see what you was about?—
You was running away with a beggar—With your
Nurse's nephew, huffy!

Pol. Lord, Papa, what signifies whose nephew he
is? He may be ne'er the worse for that.—Who knows
but he may be a Foundling, and a gentleman's son,
as well as *Tom Jones*?—My mind is resolved, —
And nothing shall ever alter it.

Scrib. Bravo, Miss *Polly*!—A fine generous spirit,
faith!

Hon. You're an impudent slut—You're undone.—

Mrs. Hon. Nay, but, look ye, *Polly*!—Mind me,
child!—You know that I—

Pol. As for my poor Mama here, you see, sir, she
is a little in the nervous way, this morning—When
she comes to herself, and Mr. *Fulep*'s draughts have taken
a proper effect, she'll be convinced I am in the right.

Hon. Hold your impertinence!—Hark ye, *Polly*.—

Pol. You; my angelick Mr. *Scribble*— [*to Scribble.*]

Scrib. *Mu chere Adorable!*

Pol. You may depend on my constancy and affec-
tion. I never read of any lady's giving up her lover,
to submit to the absurd election of her parents—I'll
have you let what will be the consequence.—I'll have
you, though we go through as many distresses as *Booth*
and *Amelia*.

Hon. Peace, huffy!

Pol. As for you, you odious Wretch, [*to Ledger.*]
how could they ever imagine that I should dream of
such a creature? A great He-monster! I would as soon
be married to the *Staffordshire* Giant—I hate you.
You are as-deceitful as *Bliss*, as rude as the *Harlowes*,
and as ugly as Doctor *Slop*. [Exit.]

Led. Mighty well, Miss, mighty well!

Scrib. Prodigious humour! high fun, faith!

Hon. She's downright raving—Mad as a *March* hare
—I'll put her into Bedlam—I'll send her to her
relations in the country—I'll have her shut up in a
nunnery—I'll—

Mrs. Hon. Come, my Sweeting, don't make your dear self so uneasy—Don't——

Hon. Hark you, woman, [*to the Nurse.*] I'll have you committed to Newgate—I'll——

Nurse. Pray, your dear honour!—[*Kneeling.*]

Hon. As for you, fir! [*to Scribble.*]—Hark ye, Strip-ling——

Scrib. Nay, nay, Old Gentleman, no bouncing!—You're mistaken in your man, fir! I know what I'm about.

Hon. Zouns, fir, and I know——

Scrib. Yes, fir, and I know that I've done nothing contrary to the twenty-sixth of the King—Above a month ago, fir, I took lodgings in Miss Polly's name and mine, in the parish of St. George's in the Fields——The bans have been asked three times, and I could have married Miss Polly to-day——So much for that.——And so, fir, your servant.——If you offer to detain me, I shall bring my action on the case for false imprisonment, sue out a bill of *Middlesex*, and upon a *Non est inventus*, if you abscond, a *Latitat*, then an *Alias*, a *Pluries*, a *Non omittas*, and so on——Or perhaps I may indict you at the sessions, bring the affair by *Certiorari* into *Bancum Regis, et cætera, et cætera, et cætera*——And now——Stop me at your peril.

[*Exit.*]

[*While Scribble speaks Nurse sneaks off.*]

Hon. I am stunn'd with his jargon, and confounded at his impudence.——I'll put an end to this matter at once——Mr. Ledger, you shall marry my daughter to-morrow morning.

Led. Not I indeed, my friend! I give up my interest in her.——She'd make a terrible wife for a sober citizen.——Who can answer for her behaviour?——I would not underwrite her for ninety *per cent.* [Exit.]

Hon. See there! see there!——My girl is undone——Her character is ruined with all the world——These damn'd Story Books!——What shall we do? Mrs. Honeycombe, what shall we do?

Mrs.

Mrs. Hon. Look ye, my Dear! you've been wrong in every particular—

Hon. Wrong!—I wrong!—

Mrs. Hon. Quite wrong, my Dear!—I wou'd not expose you before company—My tenderness, you know, is so great—But leave the whole affair to me—You are too violent—Go, my Dear, go and compose yourself, and I'll set all matters to rights—[*Going turns back.*] Don't you do any thing of your own head now—Trust it all to me, my Dear!—Be sure you do, my Love!

[*Exit.*]

Hon. (alone) Zouns, I shall run mad with vexation—I shall—Was ever man so heartily provoked?—You see now, Gentlemen, [*coming forward to the audience*] what a situation I am in!—Instead of happiness and jollity,—My friends and family about me,—A wedding and a dance,—And every thing as it should be,—Here am I, left by myself,—Deserted by my intended son-in-law—Bully'd by an attorney's clerk—My daughter mad—My wife in the vapours—And all's in confusion—This comes of Cordials and Novels—Zouns, your Stomachicks are the Devil—And a man might as well turn his daughter loose in *Covent-garden*, as trust the cultivation of her mind to

A CIRCULATING LIBRARY.

EPI.

Mrs.

EPILOGUE.

Written by Mr. GARRICK. Spoken by Miss POPE.

Enter, as Polly, laughing—Ha! ha! ha!—

MY poor Papa's in woeful agitation—
While I, the Cause, feel here, [striking her
bosom.] no palpitation—

We Girls of Reading, and superior notions,
Who from the fountain-head drink love's sweet potions,
Pity our parents, when such passion blinds 'em,
One hears the good folks rave—One never minds 'em.
Till these dear books infus'd their soft ingredients,
Asban'd and fearful, I was all Obedience.
Then my good Father did not storm in vain,
I blubb'd and cry'd—I'll ne'er do so again:
But now no bugbears can my spirit tame,

I've conquer'd Fear—And almost conquer'd Shame;
So much these Dear Instructors change and win us,
Without their light we ne'er should know what's in us:
Here we at once supply our childish wants—
NOVELS are Hotbeds for your forward Plants.
Not only Sentiments refine the Soul,
But hence we learn to be the Smart and Droll.
Each awkward circumstance for laughter serves,
From Nurse's nonsense to my Mother's NERVES:

Tho' Parents tell us, that our genius lies
In mending linen and in making pie, **AP 54**
I set such formal precepts at defiance
That preach up prudence, neatness, and compliance,
Leap these old bounds, and boldly set the pattern,
To be a Wit, Philosopher, and Slattern—

O! did all Maids and Wives, my spirit feel,
We'd make this topsy-turvy world to reel:
Let us to arms!—Our Fathers, Husbands, dare!
NOVELS will teach us all the Art of War:
Our Tongues will serve for Trumpet and for Drum;
I'll be your Leader—General HONEYCOMBE!

Too long has human nature gone astray,
Daughters should govern, Parents should obey;
Man should submit, the moment that he weds,
And hearts of oak should yield to wiser heads:
I see you smile, bold Britons!—But 'tis true—
Beat You the French;—But let your Wives beat You.—

F I N I S.